

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to FIGS. 1, 3, 4A-4D, 5A-5C, 6, 7A-7B, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. These sheets replace the original, or subsequently amended, sheets including the same figures. These amendments to the drawings are merely to correct matters of formality. Specifically, hand-written item number labels are replaced with machine-generated item number labels. Hence, no new matter is introduced in the application by these amendments to the drawings. Therefore, entry of these amended drawings is requested.

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the performance of a thorough search.

Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-5, 12-14, 18 and 19 were pending in the application. By this response, Claims 1, 12 and 18 are canceled and Claims 23-31 are added. Hence, Claims 2-5, 13, 14, 19 and 23-31 are pending in the application upon entry of this response.

Claims 2, 3, 13, 14 and 19 are amended herein.

As a preliminary matter, it is noted that the Swenson reference (U.S. Pat. No. 5,490,097) was not included on the “Notice of References Cited” (Form PTO-892) accompanying the referenced Office Action. It is requested that the Swenson reference formally be made of record by including the reference on a “Notice of References Cited” accompanying the next Office paper, to ensure the inclusion of the Swenson reference on the cover of any patents issuing from the present application.

SUMMARY OF THE REJECTIONS/OBJECTIONS

Claims 1, 3-5, 12, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Nummelin et al. (“*Nummelin*”; U.S. Patent No. 6,308,164) in view of Reeves (“*Reeves*”; U.S. Patent No. 5,709,410); and

Claims 2 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Nummelin* in view of *Reeves* further in view of Swenson (“*Swenson*”; U.S. Patent No. 5,490,097).

THE REJECTIONS BASED ON THE PRIOR ART

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

(I) Claims 1, 3-5, 12, 14, 18 and 19

Claims 1, 3-5, 12, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Nummelin* in view of *Reeves*. Independent Claims 1, 12 and 18 are canceled and dependent Claims 3, 13, 14 and 19 that depend directly from one of Claims 1, 12, and 18 are amended to depend from one of new independent claims 23, 25, or 27. Therefore, the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 12, 14, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is now moot. However, the subject matter of the cited references of record in view of the new claims is discussed herein, in reference to the new claims.

(II) Claims 2 and 13

Claims 2 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over *Nummelin* in view of *Reeves* further in view of *Swenson*. Claims 2 and 13 are amended to depend from new Claims 23 and 25, respectively. Therefore, the rejection of Claims 2 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is now moot.

However, *Swenson* does not teach or fairly suggest the feature of Claims 2 and 13 on which the Office Action relies for the rejection of the subject matter of these claims. Applicant acknowledges that *Swenson* discusses use of pre-programmed policies for use in creating a plan for completing a project or task. However, *Swenson* does not teach or fairly suggest the specific policy recited in Claims 2 and 13, which specifies that, in the context of task schedules and project management schedules, a project task cannot be partially completed. Stated otherwise, neither a task schedule nor a project management schedule can represent a task as partially completed (e.g., 90% completed), i.e., either the task is completed or it is not completed. Thus, only after the authorized task inspectors have completed their inspections of the task product and have each completed an inspection form, does the task receive an “accepted” or “completed” disposition. In contrast and as mentioned in the application, some scheduling systems allow a developer to signify that a task is partially completed. However,

because there is generally no accountability as to whether an individual's status is reliable, the current process of obtaining project status tends to shadow the realistic progress of the project.

Based additionally on the foregoing, Claims 2 and 13 are further patentable over the *Nummelin, Reeves, and Swenson* references.

NEW CLAIMS

New Claims 23-31 are added to claim subject matter disclosed in the application as originally filed. Hence, no new matter is introduced in the application by these new claims. Entry and examination of Claims 23-31 is requested.

Distinctions between the subject matter of the embodiments recited in Claims 23-31 and the subject matter disclosed in the cited references of record are as follows. The new independent Claims 23, 26 and 29 all recite similar limitations, in different valid claim formats. Generally, the limitations in these claims include (a) linking an inspection document to an individual's task schedule, where certain fields in the inspection document are mapped to certain information in the individual's task schedule, such as information associated with completion of the task; (b) the task completion information in the individual's task schedule, for a particular task, is automatically updated based on the inspection results field in the inspection document; and (c) the task completion information in the individual's task schedule, for the particular task, is updated via the links to indicate that the particular task is completed only if all correspondingly mapped inspection results fields in respective inspection documents indicate that the particular task passed the inspections. The foregoing features are described in the specification, for example, in reference to FIGS. 10-15. None of the cited reference, either individually or in combination, teaches or fairly suggests the limitations recited in Claims 23, 26 and 29.

The Office Action alleges that *Nummelin* discloses (1) automatically updating a task schedule; and (2) wherein the project task is not completed until results indicate the task is completed. Significantly, *Nummelin* does not disclose, nor does the Office Action allege that *Nummelin* discloses, that a task schedule is automatically updated based on inspection results or that the task is not indicated as completed on the task schedule until inspection results indicate the task has passed inspection. By contrast, *Nummelin* simply discusses that a project manager can input project information, which may include task status data, from a remote location/workstation via a local database. This is not a fair teaching of automatically updating a task schedule based on inspection result fields of a linked inspection document, or of only updating the task as completed upon the inspection results indicating that the task passed an inspection. The Office Action also acknowledges that *Nummelin* (referred to in the Action as Fredell at bottom of page 2 but assumed herein to mean *Nummelin*) fails to disclose receiving inspection results over a network.

Furthermore, *Reeves* does not cure the foregoing deficiencies in the teachings of *Nummelin*. The Office Action seems to rely on *Reeves* for an alleged teaching of receiving task approvals from inspectors. However, *Reeves* does not teach or fairly suggest receiving inspection documents over a network or automatically updating a linked task schedule based on specific fields in the inspection document. Additionally, *Reeves* does not disclose or fairly suggest that the task is not indicated as completed on the task schedule until inspection results indicate the task has passed inspection. Significantly, *Reeves* does not even appear to disclose any automated processes regarding inspection and scheduling or any relation between the two.

Based at least on the foregoing deficiencies in the disclosures of *Nummelin* and *Reeves*, no possible combination of the cited references of record would have made the subject matter of new Claims 23, 26 and 29 obvious. Therefore, Claims 23, 26 and 29 are patentable over

these references of record. Further, Claims 24-25 depend from Claim 23; Claims 27-28 depend from Claim 26; and Claims 30-31 depend from Claim 29. Thus, each of these dependent claims is patentable over the references of record for at least the same reasons as the independent claim from which the dependent claim respectively depends.

Furthermore, each of the new dependent claims includes at least one additional limitation that makes it separately patentable over the references of record. For example, Claims 24, 27, and 30 recite, generally, (a) linking the individual task schedule to a corresponding project management schedule; and (b) automatically updating task completion information in the project management schedule based on updated task completion information from the individual task schedule. Claims 25, 28 and 31 recite, generally, (c) an additional inspection document linked to a second individual task schedule; (d) automatically updating the second individual task schedule based on the inspection result field of the inspection document; and (e) automatically updating aggregated task completion information in the project management schedule based on updated task completion information from the multiple individual task schedules.

The Office Action alleges that *Nummelin* discloses automatically updating a management schedule based on one or more updated task schedules. However, as discussed, *Nummelin* simply discusses that a project manager can input project information, which may include task status data, from a remote location/workstation via a local database. This is not a fair teaching or suggestion of automatically updating a project management task schedule based on multiple linked individual task schedules, or of aggregating task completion information from multiple individual task schedules. For at least these additional reasons, Claims 24, 25, 27, 28, 30 and 31 are patentable over the cited references of record.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is believed next in order, and that action is most earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

Please charge any shortages or credit any overages to Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Replacement Sheets

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

on 3/27/06 by Darci Sakamoto
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